



NEWS RELEASE

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West Virginia Honey Bee Colonies

Charleston, West Virginia - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in West Virginia as of January 1, 2018 totaled 4,700, down 15 percent from January 1, 2017. The number of colonies on April 1, 2018 totaled 7,000, down 7 percent from April 1, 2017. During 2017, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 7,500, 9,000, and 8,500, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2018, were 2,000 colonies or 24 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April-June 2018 was 490, or 7 percent. During the quarter of October-December 2017, colonies lost totaled 1,200 colonies or 14 percent, the highest of any quarter in 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April-June, with 370 colonies lost or 5 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2018 were 330 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April-June 2018 was 2,100. During the quarter of April-June 2017, 4,100 colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017. The quarter of October-December 2017 added 70 colonies, the lowest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January-March 2018 were 60, or 1 percent. During the quarter of April-June 2018, 550 colonies, or 8 percent, were renovated. The quarter in 2017 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April-June with 2,500 colonies renovated, or 33 percent. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was January-March, with 100 colonies renovated. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters of 2017. The quarter of October-December 2017 had highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 60.1 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January-March 2018 and April-June 2018 are 15.0 percent and 13.8 percent, respectively.

Number of Colonies, Maximum, Lost, Percent Lost, Added, Renovated, and Percent Renovated with Five or More Colonies in West Virginia

Quarter	Number of colonies	Maximum colonies ¹	Lost colonies	Percent lost ²	Added colonies	Renovated colonies ³	Percent renovated ⁴
	(number)	(number)	(number)	(percent)	(number)	(number)	(percent)
Jan-Mar 17	5,500	8,000	800	10	450	100	1
Apr-Jun 17	7,500	7,500	370	5	4,100	2,500	33
Jul-Sep 17	9,000	9,000	930	10	440	1,900	21
Oct-Dec 17	8,500	8,500	1,200	14	70	1,600	19
Jan-Mar 18	4,700	8,500	2,000	24	330	60	1
Apr-Jun 18	7,000	7,000	490	7	2,100	550	8

¹ Number of colonies at the beginning of quarter plus all colonies moved into the state during the quarter. ² Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by maximum colonies. ³ Defined as any surviving colony that was requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package. ⁴ Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by maximum colonies.

United States - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in the United States on January 1, 2018 totaled 2.63 million colonies, down slightly from January 1, 2017. The number of colonies in the United States on April 1, 2018 was 2.69 million colonies. During 2017, honey bee colonies on January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 2.64 million, 2.69 million, 2.99 million, and 2.85 million colonies, respectively.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018, was 425 thousand colonies, or 16 percent. The number of colonies lost during the quarter of April through June 2018 was 270 thousand colonies, or 10 percent. During the quarter of October through December 2017, colonies lost totaled 425 thousand colonies, or 15 percent, the highest of any quarter in 2017. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies lost was April through June, with 286 thousand colonies lost, or 11 percent.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018 was 513 thousand colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April through June 2018 was 726 thousand. During the quarter of April through June 2017, 613 thousand colonies were added, the highest number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017. The quarter of October through December 2017 added 205 thousand colonies, the least number of honey bee colonies added for any quarter of 2017.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies from January through March 2018 was 289 thousand colonies, or 11 percent. During the quarter of April through June 2018, 715 thousand colonies, or 27 percent, were renovated. The quarter in 2017 with the highest number of colonies renovated was April through June with 763 thousand colonies renovated, or 28 percent. The quarter in 2017 with the lowest number of colonies renovated was October through December 2017, with 214 thousand or 8 percent. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through a nuc or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during all quarters of 2017. The quarter of October through December 2017 had the highest percentage of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites at 55.3 percent. The percent of colonies reported to be affected by varroa mites during January through March 2018 and April through June 2018 are 40.8 percent and 53.4 percent, respectively.